

REMARKS

Applicants have canceled claims 5, 14, 18, 26, 27, 30, and 33 without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 1-4, 6-13, 15-17, 19, 24, 25, 28, 29, 31, 32, and 34-67 are pending.

In the Office Action, claims 5 and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) based on Beck et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,273,076) in view of Bredy (U.S. Patent No. 6,302,076); and claims 14, 18, 27, 30, and 33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on Beck et al. in view of Bredy and Backlund et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,408,979). Although Applicants do not necessarily agree with those claim rejections, Applicants have canceled all of the rejected claims, thus obviating the Section 103(a) rejections.

In addition to the information previously brought to the attention of the Examiner through Information Disclosure Statements previously filed on December 12, 2003 and March 29, 2005, Applicants bring to the Examiner's attention all of the information identified in an Information Disclosure Statement filed on January 20, 2006. In particular, Applicants bring to the Examiner's attention a Request for *Ex Parte* Reexamination ("Request") filed on January 20, 2006 for U.S. Patent No. 6,688,280, which issued from parent application No. 10/143,908. That Request was recently assigned Control No. 90/007,885. For the Examiner's convenience, attached is a copy of the Request and documents accompanying the Request, including a claim chart, declaration, and references identified in the Request.

If the Examiner believes a conversation would facilitate examination of the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call Applicants' undersigned representative (571-203-2774).

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and reexamination of this application.

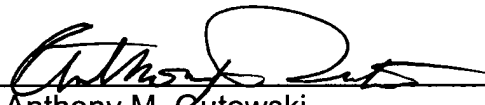
The Office Action contains a number of statements relating to the claims and cited references. Applicants decline to subscribe to any statement or assertion in the Office Action, regardless of whether it might be specifically mentioned above.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our Deposit Account No. 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: January 27, 2006

By: 
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